

Royal and Royalty Theatres.

L E T T E R

TO

PHILLIPS GLOVER, Esq.

OF

WISPINGTON, IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

[Price Two Shillings.]

Royal and Royal Theatre.

L E T T E R

TO

PHILLIPS CLOVER, Esq.



WISCONSIN

[Price Two Shillings.]

14
Royal and Royalty Theatres.

L E T T E R
TO
PHILLIPS GLOVER, ESQ.
OF
WISPINGTON, IN LINCOLNSHIRE;
IN A DEDICATION TO THE
B U R L E T T A
OF
HERO AND LEANDER,
NOW PERFORMING, WITH THE MOST DISTINGUISHED APPLAUSE,
AT THE
ROYALTY THEATRE,
IN
GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

Torquet ab obscenis jam nunc sermonibus aurem.

HOR. EP.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, NO 32, FLEET-STREET,
M.DCC.LXXXVII,

ROYAL ROYAL TOWN

LETTER
CONTENTS OF DEDICATION
TO

PHILIP GLOVER

OF THE
ROYAL ROYAL TOWN
OF THE ROYAL ROYAL TOWN
OF THE ROYAL ROYAL TOWN



H. G. GLOVER
OF THE ROYAL ROYAL TOWN
OF THE ROYAL ROYAL TOWN

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L O N D O N

Printed by J. GLOVER
OF THE ROYAL ROYAL TOWN

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TO

DEDICATION

THE JOURNAL OF THE
SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHITECTS
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T O
PHILLIPS GLOVER, ESQUIRE,

O F
WISPINGTON IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

DEAR SIR,

WE have been told, that in former times it was an established custom with men of letters to address their works to some eminent for their merit to mankind, or particular patronage of the writers themselves, or knowledge in the matter of which they treated. Under these regards, it was a memorable honour to both parties, and a very pleasing record of their commerce with each other. These applications were never stuffed with impertinent praises, but were the native product of their esteem, which was implicitly received, or generally known to be due to the patron of the work : but vain flourishes came into the world, with other barbarous embellishments ; and the enumeration of titles, and great actions in the patrons themselves, or their ancestors, are as foreign to the matter in question as the ornaments in a *Gotbick* building.

B

Sir

Sir Richard Steel, to whose sagacity we are indebted for these remarks, as if playing at cross-purposes with his own good sense, launched into the very error he so justly censured ; for, in a dedication to Mr. Methuen, he tells the public, that no man sat a *horse* with greater ease, or *danced* with greater elegance, than our ambassador at the court of Portugal.

From this introduction you must perceive, I have not taken up the pen, to insult you with a catalogue of those polite absurdities, which too often disgrace the works of our best authors, and which may be truly called, the *sober follies of the wise*. I know you possess an understanding that would treat such ribaldry with contempt, and I really feel a something, call it pride if you will, that prevents me from descending to flatter any man. To say, that you are the warmest friend; that you possess a heart, which is the constant mansion of generosity and benevolence; and a fortune, though not equal to your merits, yet competent and unincumbered, is only publishing what is already known to half the metropolis. Suffer me, however, to declare, what is only known in a private circle, that I enjoy the happiness necessarily arising from an intimacy with the gentleman I now address.

The generous encouragement you have given to a man, whose pursuits, as they are directed to an honourable support of a numerous

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merous and unblemished family, interest every good mind in his behalf, hath been for some time past the subject of general conversation. Some people indeed have ventured to disapprove of your endeavours to promote the establishment of a theatre in Wellclose square, under the direction of Mr. Palmer; and others have applauded them in terms of the most unbounded panegyric.—That you merit on this occasion the warmest commendations, I shall endeavour to prove, without suffering one idea to escape me, injurious to the private characters of those gentlemen, who avowedly oppose the establishment of a city theatre. The advocates of Mr. Harris and Mr. Colman have indeed, very injudiciously, and I must add very illiberally, bespattered Mr. Palmer in some of our daily publications; and the friends of that gentleman, on the other hand, have not been less sedulous in their endeavours, but have sent abroad whole volleys of those “paper bullets of the brain,” that frequently, under the disguise of wit, do mischief, without the most distant probability of doing good. To speak ingenuously of these gentlemen, none of them are fairly subject to reproach. The patentees of Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and the Haymarket, consider it their interest to oppose the establishment of a theatre in Wellclose square; and Mr. Palmer finds it his interest to defend his property in that jurisdiction.—In support of their re-

spective appeals to the justice of their country, or to the indulgence of the people, all indecent personalities should be avoided; one smart hit may produce a reply, but the public will sneer at both. To investigate the subject liberally and justly, as far as it relates to a *permanent* establishment of Mr. Palmer's theatre in the Tower liberty, the possible good or evil arising to the *community*, ought to be the principal object of our enquiry. To say, that the proprietors of Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and the Haymarket, would be injured in their respective theatrical properties, if Mr. Palmer obtains an act of parliament authorising him to perform plays in the Tower hamlets, and for that reason *only* the legislature ought not to interpose, would be trifling with the good sense of the people. It is of no consequence to government, or to the million residing within the walls of London, whether the winter managers, and Mr. Colman, play to empty benches, or overflowing audiences. If they are able, diligent, and liberal, they cannot fail of accumulating very considerable fortunes, and may bid defiance to every exertion of Mr. Palmer in the east. But let this be as it may, the PUBLIC GOOD ought to be first consulted; and that Mr. Palmer's theatre, if established by an act of the legislature, must be productive of very considerable benefits to every class of people throughout

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out the metropolis, is a fact, I shall principally endeavour to elucidate.

As a necessary preface to an investigation of this subject, permit me to lay before you a candid statement of the several acts of parliament now in being for the regulation of our stage, and a few observations on the legal construction and operations of them.—These explanations become necessary at present, because Mr. Palmer hath been, as I conceive, very untruly, and I must add very indelicately accused of *braving* the laws of his country, by *convening* a set of *banditti* (such is the language we have lately heard) at Wellclose square, in defiance of all order and decorum. These, Sir, are very weighty accusations, and ought to have been very seriously considered before they were suffered to pass the ordeal of a British press. If Mr. Palmer, at any period of his life, had manifested a disposition so derogatory to the character of a good citizen, he would have experienced the detestation of every friend to civil liberty; but if it appears, that, so far from even encroaching on the laws, he hath constantly made them the rule of his conduct, what shall we say of his accusers?

Let us now see how the law stands.—The several acts of parliament now in being for the regulation of our stage, are the 10th, the 17th, and the 25th of the late King. The first of these statutes passed during the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, and

is intituled "an act to explain and amend so much of an act, made in the 12th year of the reign of Queen Ann, intituled, an act for reducing the laws relating to rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and vagrants, into one act of parliament, and for the more effectual punishing such rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and vagrants, and sending them whither they ought to be sent, AS RELATES TO COMMON PLAYERS OF INTERLUDES."—The statute of the 12th of Ann enacts, "that all persons pretending themselves to be patent-gatherers, or collectors for prisons, gaols, or hospitals, and wandering abroad for that purpose; all fencers, bearwards, common players of interludes, and other persons therein named and expressed, shall be deemed rogues and vagabonds."

You must observe, that at the time the last-mentioned statute passed the legislature, our civil and religious establishment was not so perfectly settled as to bid defiance to the machinations of disaffection. The revolution took place but a few years before, and the abdicated family had left many friends in England. Considerable numbers of the lower class of people frequently assembled in various parts of the island, under pretence of being patent gatherers, collectors for prisons, &c. &c. and had committed various excesses, to the great annoyance of the queen's peace; so that it was incumbent on the legislature

gislature to stop these excesses, as they might lead to another revolution, and which indeed was attempted in the year 1715, but three years afterwards. The wisdom of the legislature, therefore, in preventing such meetings, is apparent. *Players of interludes* were very properly denominated sturdy beggars, rogues, and vagabonds, as their parties were chiefly composed of gypsies and wanderers of various descriptions; but I fancy it never once entered into the brain of any reasonable person (Sir Robert Walpole excepted) that by the words "*Players of interludes*," the legislature meant such people as were competent to, and exercised the very arduous, and the very useful profession of an actor, or that a single glance was directed at the drama of England. The supposition is too extravagant. I shall therefore proceed to state the letter and spirit of the statute passed in the 10th year of the reign of the late king, and what gave rise to a law, that stands (if we except the third section) a disgraceful record of Sir Robert Walpole's influence in the British parliament.

The title of this statute I have before stated *verbatim*. It is declared to be an act for the purpose of explaining so much of the 12th of Ann, *as relates to common players of interludes*; and, after reciting that some *doubts* have arisen concerning so much of the said act as relates to *common players of interludes*, it is enacted, " That from after the 24th day

B 4 " of

“ of June 1737, every person who shall,
“ for *hire, gain, or reward*, act, represent, or
“ perform, or cause to be acted, represented,
“ or performed, any *interlude, tragedy, co-*
“ *medy, opera, play, farce*, OR OTHER EN-
“ TERTAINMENT OF THE STAGE, OR any
“ part or parts therein, in case such per-
“ son shall not have any legal settlement
“ in the place where the same shall be
“ acted, represented, or performed, without
“ authority, by virtue of letters patent
“ from his Majesty, his heirs, successors, or
“ predecessors, or without licence from the
“ Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's house-
“ hold for the time being, shall be deemed
“ to be a *rogue and vagabond* within the
“ intent and meaning of the said recited act,
“ and shall be liable and subject to all such
“ penalties and punishments, and by such
“ methods of conviction, as are inflicted on or
“ appointed by the said act for the punish-
“ ment of rogues and vagabonds, who shall
“ be found wandering, begging, and misor-
“ dering themselves, within the intent and
“ meaning of the act of the 12th of Queen
“ Ann.”

By this section you find, Sir, that if an actor, no matter how capable in his profession, or respectable in his private character, represents a dramatic character in any place throughout the realm of England, not tolerated by the statute, he is declared a *rogue* and a *vagabond*, and must suffer the same punishment

punishment that *patent gatherers, sturdy beggars, fencers, bearwards*, and other wandering miscreants, suffered in the reign of Queen Ann. This you will say was indeed *levelling* the profession of an actor, and rendering it contemptible throughout the empire. But that, Sir, was the very intention of the Minister. — His reasons you shall have presently.

The second section of this act, subjects the person offending to the penalty of 50*l.* for every exhibition; on the payment of which sum, he was not to suffer any of the pains or penalties inflicted by the act of Queen Ann.

The third section (notwithstanding the elegant Chesterfield opposed it with all his eloquence) may, in my opinion, be supported upon every principle of sound polity. The law here expressly says, that no new plays, or additions to old ones, shall be acted, unless a copy thereof be first sent to the Lord Chamberlain of the King's household, who must signify his permission to the master or manager of the play-house, before such new plays or additions can be represented. And the fourth section enacts, that every person offending, shall for every such offence forfeit the sum of 50*l.* and every grant, licence, and authority (in case there be such) under which the masters, manager or managers, set up, formed, or continued such play-house, shall determine, and become absolutely void.

What the late Lord Chesterfield observed,
on

on debating this section in the upper house of parliament may be true—that Sir Robert Walpole began with the stage, that he might feel the pulse of the nation, before he began with the press. But we all know, Sir, the best institutions may be so perverted, as to render legislative correction necessary. Our stage, in the libidinous reign of Charles the II^d, and indeed until the 10th of George the II^d, was frequently a public nuisance; a wicked writer, provided he was a witty one, seldom failed in his application to a theatrical manager; who, not being subject to any control but his own pleasure, frequently represented plays inimical to the good government of the state, and injurious to the morals of the people. In truth, Sir, the stage in England (although when under proper limitations, must be considered an institution that merits the highest encouragement) was so abominably perverted, that a parliamentary interposition became indispensable. The section I am now speaking of, purges the stage of all those obscenities, which so long disgraced it, and gives a strength and purity to the drama, that must carry it down to posterity as a blessing.

The fifth section does not merit, in my opinion, the countenance of the people. It enacts, that no person or persons shall be authorised by virtue of any letters patent from his Majesty, his heirs, successors, or

PREDE-

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PREDECESSORS*, or by the licence of the Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's household for the time being, to act, represent, or perform for hire, gain, or reward, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the stage, or any part or parts therein, in any part of *Great Britain*, except in the city of *Westminster*, and within the liberties thereof, and in such places where his Majesty, his heirs or successors, shall in their royal persons reside, *and during such residence only.*

Here, Sir, we have an abridgment of the King's prerogative, and, as I conceive, without the shadow of a reason. It is true, that some of our monarchs have granted patents for theatres, with as little ceremony as they granted patents for nostrums; but I conceive, when the legislature vested a power in the King's Lord Chamberlain, to negative any dramatic piece intended for representation, every possible mischief was done away, and therefore limiting the King's authority, in this instance, to the city and liberties of

* It has been said that Mr. Harris is in possession of a dormant patent, granted by Charles the Second to Killigrew, and that he could, under the authority of that patent, erect a theatre in the city of London, or in any part of England, where plays might be represented. If such a patent really exists, the operations of it must be confined to the city and liberties of Westminster, as the word *predecessors*, in this section, renders it a dead letter out of that jurisdiction,

Westminster,

Westminster, when no public injury could arise from his former exercise of it, was not only unconstitutional, but unnecessary.—I cannot indeed suppose, that Sir Robert Walpole would in any other instance have weakened prerogative; but he was determined (for reasons which I shall recite presently) to give the British drama the *coup de grace*, and, as he was a minister of uncommon penetration, we may suppose he found but little difficulty in reconciling his sovereign to a measure, that at once gratified his pride and his resentments.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth sections, only go to the recovery of penalties—to include persons acting in public houses—and to the limitations of actions; I shall therefore pass them by without further notice.

As I have now stated the letter of this act, permit me to lay before you the occasion of it.

Sir Robert Walpole, in the year 1737, was so very unpopular, that a phalanx of polemical writers entered the lists, determined not only to displace him, but, if possible, to cause his impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanors. Some witty dramatic writers of that time, had also lampooned the minister on the stage, under various fictitious characters, and had not only wounded his feelings as a man, but very materially injured him as a minister in the estimation of the people. Sir Robert, who could trace consequences

sequences as ably as any man of his time, determined to begin with the stage, and, for the purpose of introducing his scheme of a reform to his master, as a measure of great importance to government, caused a piece of two acts to be written, fraught with the most pointed sarcasms on the late king and his ministers. This little drama was styled the *Golden Rump*, and was sent to Gifford, who at that time was manager of a theatre in Goodman's Fields, and had made Sir Robert Walpole his enemy, by representing pieces on his stage inimical to the character and interests of the minister. Gifford did not directly fall into the trap by acting the piece; but, conceiving it a fair opportunity to make Sir Robert his friend, took the copy to the minister, and, to shew his *great respect* for him, discovered the name of the person who delivered it to him, and who he conceived to be the author. Sir Robert Walpole on this occasion met Gifford in his own way, and performed his part with great address. He seemed to be highly pleased with the manager, for his very respectful, and proper attention to government, and desired he would call on him in a few days. Immediately on the departure of Gifford, Sir Robert took the copy to the king, and read the whole to him. The sovereign, who possessed as good a heart as any in his dominions, was not an Alfred in ability. He was subject to the most violent gusts of passion, but on the occasion I

am

am now speaking of, manifested the most ungovernable disposition. He expressed a desire to cut up every theatre in England by the roots. The *amiable* servant however waited until the tempest had subsided, and then reconciled his master to the constitutional and effectual operations of an act of parliament. A bill was immediately introduced, and, what deserves particular notice, passed the legislature in the course of a very few days.

Gifford, having discovered Sir Robert's intention, previous to the matter coming before parliament, applied to a friend of his, who was a gentleman of great respectability in the city, and a member of the house of commons, to oppose the bill. His friend promised him his assistance, and this produced an assurance from the minister, that, as the act would silence the Theatre in Goodman's Fields, an employment equal in its emoluments to 600*l. per annum*, should be provided for Gifford. This promise however turned out as ministerial promises generally do, it produced *nothing*, and Gifford was left in the possession of a theatre, which he might turn to any other use, than that for which it was intended. In this situation he remained for some time, until at length a scheme was suggested, for the purpose of enabling him to evade the act. It was this—The statute made it penal to represent plays, out of the city and liberties of Westminster, for *bire,*
I
gain,

gain, or reward. Now, said the friends of Gifford, you are not prevented by this law from playing any dramatic piece, provided you do not take money for so doing.—Advertise a *concert*. You may receive a pecuniary recompence for a musical exhibition, and give a play.—Gifford took the hint, and one of his bills now extant, runs thus—On such a night “will be performed a concert of vocal “and instrumental musick, in two parts. “Between the acts the audience will be entertained, GRATIS, with the tragedy of “King Richard the third. The part of “Richard by a *young gentleman, being his first “appearance on any stage;*” and this young gentleman was no less a personage, than the admirable Garrick.

Sir Robert Walpole having promised to provide for Gifford, which he never intended to do, and observing the manager to act with such caution, as to confine his dramatic exhibitions to the works of Shakespeare, and a few deceased poets of eminence, never interrupted him.—Gifford played on, and was so successful, that in a few years he purchased the estate, which is now called Coventry Court, and is situated in the Haymarket.—You will, I hope, pardon this digression, as it gave me an opportunity of introducing a few anecdotes not generally known, particularly one respecting Mr. Garrick.—That great luminary of the British stage certainly made his first appearance at the very time Gifford
was

was playing in the teeth of Sir Robert Walpole's act of parliament.

The history I have now given you of this statute, must explain *what* the legislature had in contemplation at the moment the bill passed into a law, and what were the *real objects* of it. By possessing yourself fully of these particulars, you will be enabled to form a very correct judgment (as far as this particular law goes) on a point of all others the most interesting to Mr. Palmer, whether he hath presumed to *brave* the laws of his country, or submitted to them, as became an honest citizen.

The 17th of Geo. II, will not take up much of our time. The obvious purpose of this statute is to amend, and render more effectual the laws relating to rogues, vagabonds, and other idle and disorderly persons, and to houses of correction.

The second section takes in all that description of vagrants particularly specified in the 12th of Ann, and the 10th of Geo. II; and afterwards declares, that all jugglers, gypsies, or persons wandering in the habit or form of gypsies—all persons that leave their wives or children, whereby they become chargeable to any parish or place—and a variety of unsettled people, not described under either of the before-mentioned acts of parliament, shall be deemed rogues and vagabonds.

'This

D E D I C A T I O N. 17

This act is divided into 34 sections; but as I do not find any of them, except the foregoing one, and the 27th, immediately relevant to the matter now under consideration, I shall touch upon them alone. The 27th section enacts, "That any person aggrieved by any
 "act of any justice or justices of the peace
 "out of sessions, in or concerning the execution of this act, may appeal to the next
 "general or quarter sessions of the county,
 "riding, liberty, or division, giving reasonable notice thereof, whose order thereupon shall be final."—I state this section of the act *verbatim*, because some of the magistrates acting within the Tower liberty were, not long since, very unjustly and very ridiculously accused of straying from the letter of this particular clause. Several of Mr. Palmer's performers were taken into custody, on a warrant granted by a magistrate, as persons offending *against* this law, and were committed to the house of correction for a specific time. The parties adjudged to suffer this punishment, were advised to appeal against the magisterial adjudication to the next quarter sessions. They did so, and upon their giving proper sureties to appear and prosecute their appeal, two magistrates acting within the jurisdiction of the Tower hamlets bailed them. This was no new case—people convicted before a justice of that liberty as vagrants, under the 17th of Geo. II. have been bailed on their appealing against the conviction,

viction, since that law had operation.—They were not *discharged* from the conviction, but *bailed* on the appeal, which I understand is a constant practice in the Tower hamlets. Whether the magistrate that committed Mr. Palmer's performers acted legally or illegally is a question you will be able to answer very conclusively, when we consider the extent and powers of the statute under which Mr. Palmer hath acted hitherto.

You will observe, that Mr. Palmer exhibits various performances under the authority of a statute passed in the 25th year of the reign of the late king;—whether he hath regulated his performances by this law, or gone beyond it, is at present the chief matter for consideration.

25TH GEO. II.—The title of this act runs thus, “An act for the better preventing thefts and robberies, and *for regulating places of public entertainment*, and punishing persons keeping disorderly houses.”

The first section is to prevent people from advertising a reward for the return of things stolen; a practice that encouraged thefts and robberies throughout the whole kingdom*.

The second, is that section on which Mr. Palmer rests a very essential part of his case, and therefore I shall lay it before you, *mutatis*

* The proprietors of our daily papers ought to print this section, and place it in their several offices, as they are subject to a forfeiture of 50*l.* for every advertisement of this tendency, that appears.—The gang of informers know this.

mutandis,

mutandis, as it stands on our statute book.

“ And whereas the multitude of places
 “ of entertainment for the lower sort of
 “ people is another great cause of thefts and
 “ robberies, as they are thereby tempted to
 “ spend their small substance in riotous plea-
 “ sures, and in consequence are put on un-
 “ lawful methods of supplying their wants
 “ and renewing their pleasures: In order,
 “ therefore, to prevent the said temptation to
 “ thefts and robberies, and to correct as far
 “ as may be the habit of idleness, which is
 “ become too general over the whole king-
 “ dom, and is productive of much mischief
 “ and inconvenience; Be it enacted by the au-
 “ thority aforesaid, that from and after the 1st
 “ day of December one thousand seven hun-
 “ dred and fifty-two, any *house*, room, garden,
 “ or other place, kept for public DANCING,
 “ MUSIC, OR OTHER PUBLIC ENTERTAIN-
 “ MENT OF THE LIKE KIND, in the cities
 “ of London and Westminster, or within
 “ twenty miles thereof, without a licence
 “ had for that purpose from the last preceding
 “ Michaelmas quarter sessions of the peace,
 “ to be holden for the county, city, riding,
 “ liberty, or division in which such house,
 “ room, garden, or other place is situate
 “ (who are hereby authorized and impowered
 “ to grant such licences as they in their dis-
 “ cretion shall think proper) signified un-
 “ der the hands and seals of four or more of
 “ the justices there assembled, shall be deem-

“ ed a disorderly house or place; and every
“ such licence shall be signed and sealed by
“ the said justices in open court, and after-
“ wards be publicly read by the clerk of the
“ peace, together with the names of the
“ justices subscribing the same; and no such
“ licence shall be granted at any adjourned
“ sessions; nor shall any fee or reward be
“ taken for any such licence: and it shall
“ and may be lawful to and for any constable
“ or other person, being thereunto autho-
“ rized by warrant under the hand and seal
“ of one or more of his majesty’s justices of
“ the peace of the county, city, riding, di-
“ vision, or liberty where such house or
“ place shall be situate, to enter such house
“ or place, and to seize every person who shall
“ be found therein, in order that they may
“ be dealt with according to law: and every
“ person keeping such house, room, garden,
“ or other place, *without such licence* as afore-
“ said, shall forfeit the sum of one hundred
“ pounds to such person as will sue for the
“ same, and be otherwise punishable as the
“ law directs in cases of disorderly houses.”

The third section obliges the master or proprietors to affix over the door or entrance of every house, room, &c. &c. or licensed place as aforesaid, an inscription in large capital letters in the words following: LI-
CENSED PURSUANT TO ACT OF PARLIA-
MENT OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF KING
GEORGE THE SECOND.

Now,

D E D I C A T I O N. 21

Now, Sir, let us examine the operations of this statute, as far as they apply to Mr. Palmer's theatre.—You find that four justices sitting in their quarter sessions of the peace may, at their discretion, license any *house, room, or other place kept for public dancing, music, or other public entertainment of the like kind.* The first question therefore is, Have four justices of the Tower hamlets licensed Mr. Palmer's house, as directed by the statute? It is acknowledged they have. The second question is, Hath Mr. Palmer caused the inscription to be placed on his house, particularly specified in this act of parliament? We all know he hath obeyed this section to a comma.—So far then Mr. Palmer is within the law.—The third question that naturally arises, is, Have the entertainments, hitherto exhibited at Wellclose square, been strictly conformable to the letter and spirit of the 25th of Geo. II; or have they been entertainments of the stage within the letter and spirit of the 10th and 17th of Geo. II? — Let us now see how this matter really stands.

Mr. Palmer, before he opened his theatre in Wellclose square, announced his intention of representing plays, under the authority of the constable's permission, and a licence granted by the magistrates acting within the jurisdiction of the Tower liberty. The winter managers sent him word, that if he performed either tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or *other entertainment of the stage*, with-

out the authority of an act of parliament, they would cause him and his performers to be prosecuted, under the statutes of the 10th and 17th of the late king; and, that he might know the law, published the opinions of three respectable counsel, all of whom agreed, that Mr. Palmer, by *acting plays* in Wellclose square, would subject himself and his performers to the penalties particularly specified in the acts of the 10th and 17th of Geo. II. Mr. Palmer, finding the law was against him, IMMEDIATELY SUBMITTED. The first night of opening he performed the play of *As you like it*, for a charity, but not for *bire, gain, or reward*; so that of course he did not offend against any law now in being for the regulation of our stage.

Mr. Palmer then declared his intention of confining his exhibitions to *dancing, music, OR OTHER PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS OF THE LIKE KIND*, having obtained a licence agreeable to the statute of the 25th of Geo. II. In the course of his performances, a *pantomime* was represented; and several of the performers were taken into custody on a warrant granted by a magistrate acting within the Tower hamlets, the particulars of which I have just now mentioned. Upon this occasion Mr. Harris was accused of closeting a simple magistrate belonging to the Tower Hamlets, and taking a *shop* for him in the vicinity of Mr. Palmer's theatre, that he might with greater ease apprehend the performers. I protest,
Sir,

Sir, if this be a fact, I cannot see there was any thing extremely reprehensible in it. Mr. Harris had persuaded himself that the mortgagees and proprietors of Covent Garden theatre would be injured, and he was determined to exert every means in his power to defeat Mr. Palmer. Be this as it may, the question for public consideration is (and I shall confine myself to it), Have Mr. Harris, the proprietors of Drury Lane, Mr. Colman, and Mr. Palmer, conducted themselves throughout the whole of this business according to the *laws of the land*? or have they or any of them attempted to abuse or evade them? Upon this ground alone, must they stand or fall in the estimation of the public.

The acting magistrate committed the performers to the house of correction for the term of fourteen days, but as constantly as he committed them, they appealed, and were admitted to bail. This proceeding gave rise to a question that brings the matter home at once.—Mr. Palmer asserted that his exhibitions were tolerated by the 25th of Geo. II. Mr. Harris declared he was not authorized to perform BURLETTAS or PANTOMIMES; for, notwithstanding they did not come under the description of tragedy, comedy, &c. &c. as recited in the 10th and 17th of Geo. II, yet still they are included under those general words, “*other entertainments of the stage.*” Here the parties, Sir, are fairly at issue.—“I meet you directly on the fact,”

says Mr. Palmer; "but to get at a fair interpretation of these words, we must consider *what* the legislature had really in contemplation at the time the 10th and 17th of Geo. II. were agitated in parliament. Sir Robert Walpole's *ostensible* reasons," says Mr. Palmer, "for introducing and supporting the first of these acts (although, I believe, he felt a personal and private interest in the whole business) were these:—To prevent the morals of the people from being corrupted by libidinous and profligate writers for the stage; to protect government from the attacks of disaffected or disappointed people, through the same channel; and to shield private characters from the envenomed shaft of wicked wit, envy, and malevolence*. To accomplish these good purposes were the avowed objects of that statute. The 17th of Geo. II. operates to the same effect." Now," says Mr. Palmer, "taking for granted (what I believe you will not venture to deny) that such were the ostensible reasons for passing these laws, give me leave to ask, in the name of common-sense, by what possible construction of the words *other entertainments of the stage*, can you suppose the legislature meant to include *burlettas* or *pantomimes*? Can any thing be more direct, clear, and decisive, than that our legislature meant, by the words *other entertainments of the stage*, such other

* Vide the parliamentary debates of that period.

"exhibitions

“ exhibitions, not particularly described under the title of tragedy, comedy, &c. *as might lead to the evil purposes I have before mentioned?* Surely, Mr. Harris, you will not say that *burlettas* or *pantomimes* have any wicked tendency. Apollo may impose himself on Midas as a shepherd, and harlequin may change an amaranthine bower into a fish-pond, without doing the least injury to the government of the country, or the morals of our children.

“ But, Sir, I have said thus much on the act under which you have proceeded, because I was determined to meet the argument on your own ground. Give me leave now to inform you, that *burlettas* and *pantomimes* are expressly tolerated under the 25th of Geo. II.—The words of that statute are, *dancing, music, OR OTHER PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS OF THE LIKE KIND.*—The only question then is simply this, Are *burlettas* and *pantomimes* *musical entertainments?* Surely no man will be so extravagantly absurd, as to say they are not; because the first is recitative and song from the beginning to the end of it; not a word of prose-dialogue is introduced, but all poetry accompanied with music, even to a monosyllable. If such an entertainment, therefore, be not a musical one, and within the obvious intent and meaning of the 25th of Geo. II, I may venture

“ venture to assert the English language has
 “ no meaning.—The second, you know very
 “ well, Mr. Harris, is composed entirely of
 “ *music, dancing, and scenery*—it is all
 “ dumb-shew, except a few songs which
 “ may be occasionally introduced. Speaking
 “ pantomimes I shall not perform, because
 “ they might, by a forced construction of the
 “ statute, be deemed *comedies*.—But this is
 “ not all, Sir:—The proprietors of Sadler’s
 “ Wells have performed burlettas and pan-
 “ tomimes for these twenty years past;
 “ Astley, Hughes, and others, licensed under
 “ the 25th of Geo. II, have followed their
 “ example *. Perhaps you may say, that
 “ nothing

* Mr. Bearcroft lately gave an opinion, That panto-
 mimes were included under the general words, “*other en-
 tertainments of the stage,*” expressed in the 10th and 17th
 of Geo. II.—The learned counsel is a man of such un-
 blemished honour, that we cannot suppose he would give
 what the gentlemen of the long robe jocularly call an ac-
 commodating opinion.—The fact truly is, Mr. Bearcroft
 did not remember his former declaration made in *open
 court*, and in his professional character of a barrister, That
pantomimes and *burlettas* might be represented at ASTLEY’S,
 provided he was licensed by four magistrates acting within
 the Surry jurisdiction; and produced the statute of the 25th
 of the late king in support of this doctrine. The case al-
 luded to stands thus:—Astley had performed *burlettas*,
pantomimes, and a variety of other entertainments, for al-
 most 16 years, *without a licence*. An information was laid
 against him, and Mr. Bearcroft was counsel for the in-
 formant. Speaking to the jury, the learned advocate
 said—“ There can be no difficulty in this matter. Every
 “ man that can read the act passed in the 25th of the late
 “ king

D E D I C A T I O N. 27

“ nothing can be inferred from this, but a
 “ kind forbearance on the part of the winter
 “ and summer managers. But, Sir, give me
 “ leave to tell you, that I am authorised,
 “ by as eminent an opinion as Westminster
 “ Hall produces, to say directly and une-
 “ quivocally, that you can no more stop the
 “ proprietors of Sadler’s Wells, or any per-
 “ son licensed under the 25th of Geo. II.
 “ from performing *burlettas* or *pantomimes*,
 “ than you can shut up the doors of the
 “ house of commons. I know it has been
 “ said, and, what is very extraordinary, with
 “ some gravity, that *burlettas* and panto-
 “ mimes are entertainments of the stage,
 “ *because* they have been represented for
 “ many years in the theatres of Drury Lane,

“ king must see, that Mr. Astley cannot perform *burlettas*
 “ or *pantomimes* WITHOUT A LICENCE from the magis-
 “ trates acting within this jurisdiction.—Let him produce
 “ such a licence, and the present indictment must fall at
 “ once.”—This was the language of Mr. Bearcroft, *ver-*
batim; and he was certainly right. Astley had no licence
 from the magistrates, and would have been convicted of
 course, but the informer could not identify the person of
 Hughes, who at that time was concerned with Astley, and
 was the immediate object of the information.—The opera-
 tions of the 25th of Geo. II. being fully explained on this
 occasion by Mr. Bearcroft, Astley immediately took out a
 licence, and has performed *burlettas* and *pantomimes* under
 that authority ever since.—Now Mr. Bearcroft says—you
 shall not perform these entertainments, because they are
 prohibited (except at the theatres royal) by the 10th and
 17th of Geo. II. — Such is the contradictory language of
 a gentleman, whose professional abilities every man must
 admire, and whose integrity is unquestionable!

“ Covent

“ Covent Garden, and the Haymarket.
 “ Now really, Sir, if your representing such
 “ pieces creates of itself a legal disability in
 “ me, I must, and every other person licensed
 “ under the 25th of Geo. II. must, shut up
 “ their houses. You have nothing more to do
 “ than to have *fireworks* on your stage, or to
 “ get some fellow to balance a spontoon in a
 “ new way, and if I do the like you may pro-
 “ secute me and my people for exhibiting
 “ *entertainments of the stage*, as directed by the
 “ 10th and 17th of Geo. II.—In short, Sir,
 “ you may in that case monopolize every spe-
 “ cies of entertainment in the kingdom.”

You will now judge, from Mr. Palmer's
 observations, whether he hath acted hitherto
 within the laws, or attempted to *brave* them:
 In my opinion, he has acted irreproachably
 throughout the whole. That he is autho-
 rized under the 25th of Geo. II. to per-
 form *burlettas* and *pantomimes*, provided he
 steers clear of dialogue, is a matter I really
 think cannot admit of the smallest contro-
 versy: whether he may look to the indul-
 gence of the legislature, with any probability
 of success, for an act that will enable him to
 perform plays, is a subject that requires a
 distinct consideration.

We have lately heard, that a theatre in
 Wellclose square, although sanctioned by an
 act of parliament, would CORRUPT the mo-
 rals of the people. Perhaps there never yet
 escaped from the lips of the most disorder-
 dered

dered patient in bedlam, an absurdity fraught with more extravagance than this. The man who opposes Mr. Palmer's application to the legislature on such grounds, must serve him very essentially *. Will any reasonable person

* SIR JOHN HAWKINS, late *chairman* of the Quarter Sessions at Hicks's Hall, would be a very *inoffensive* character, were it not for a terrible disorder (under which the poor gentleman has laboured for some years) usually styled the CACOETHES SCRIBENDI. It raged with such uncommon violence some time ago, that he determined to write the life of our celebrated Rambler, and, notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of all his friends, absolutely published a very large octavo on that subject. — A *certain wag*, who frequently visited the knight during his biographical labours, cast his eye upon a passage, which, just at the moment, had, in a *fine frenzy*, received from *Hawky's* pen a *local habitation*. — The words were — "A play-house, and the *regions* about it, are the HOT-BEDS of vice." For God's sake, my dear friend (said the wit) strike out the *hot-beds*. — Indeed I will not, answered the knight; my *hot-beds* shall stand. — "Pray, SIR JOHN HAWKINS," replied his friend, very gravely, "are you aware of the consequences? — If theatres are the *hot-beds of vice*, what are we to think of the King, Queen, Princess Royal, and all the Princesses, or indeed all the Royal Family? they frequently indulge in these *hot-beds*; and the best, and greatest of the King's subjects follow his example. In truth, Sir John, you are going to *libel* the whole Royal Family, and, what is very extraordinary (considering you was *educated* an attorney) without knowing it." — Notwithstanding all this, Sir John's *hot-beds* stood their ground. — Reader, mark the consequence: — A critic of the most brilliant talents, in the Monthly Review for July, laid hold of poor Hawky, and, placing him in the several ATTITUDES of a *biographer*, an *egotist*, a *relater of facts* — a *book-maker* — a *politician*, a *moralist*, a *critic*, and an *editor*, completed a *pantomime* that set half the town a tittering.

person assert, that people of any class or denomination, in Liverpool, York, Manchester, Edinburgh, or the several trading towns in England where plays are represented under the authority of parliament, have been *injured in their morals* by such exhibitions? Or can any man of sane mind for a moment suppose, that a theatre in Drury Lane, Covent Garden, or the Haymarket, will *improve* the morals of the people (for such is inferred, though not directly expressed), and a theatre established under the same restrictions, and by the same authority, in the Tower hamlets, will *injure* the morals of the inhabitants. This species of jargon, for it is impossible to consider it reasoning, is a puny effort to catch the prejudices of such people, as have lived in that busy part of the metropolis for many years, and have been taught to consider dramatic entertainments as so many temptations to idleness and dissipation.

It must be acknowledged, that when the citizens of London originally opposed the establishment of a theatre within their gates, they were directed by sound polity and good

tittering.—All the flowers reared in poor Hawky's *beds* were in a moment cut down by this colossian critic, and left to wither in the warehouse of his unfortunate bookseller.

Would it not be an act of great kindness in the friends of this *chairman*, to deprive him of pen, ink, and paper?

sense.

sense.—When Gifford opened his theatre in Goodman's Fields, there was no controlling power; he was the sole arbiter of the good or evil tendency of the piece to be represented. The citizens of London, although the great support of the British monarchy, felt themselves insulted by that execrable performance, audaciously styled the *London Cuckolds*. The libidinous writings of those abandoned times were frequently obtruded on them, to the manifest violation of all order and decorum. Feeling therefore very properly for the morals of their youth, the citizens determined to oppose any establishment that gave such a mischievous power to a private individual. But, Sir, the stage at this day is directly the reverse of what it was. To prove this beyond all controversy, it is only necessary to remind you, that not a single line can be delivered on any stage in England, acting under the authority of parliament, without first receiving the Lord Chamberlain's fiat. The master or manager who ventures to offend against this law, forfeits 50*l.* for every offence, and his licence (if such there be) declared absolutely void. This at once, and in a manner the most complete and effectual, does away every objection that can be started against the parliamentary establishment of a city theatre on the ground of *immorality*.—The good consequences that must necessarily result to people of every rank and occupation, furnishes indeed a most
pleasing

pleasing speculation. After the business of the day is completed, and relaxation becomes necessary, the youth of both sexes, through a medium that enforces precept by example, must behold the horrid consequences of disobedience to parents, masters, or such as have been placed as guardians of their infancy. They will behold the happiness that flows unremittingly from a dutiful and virtuous demeanor; they will behold the coposition of right and wrong, which must assist their judgments on almost every occasion that occurs on the great stage of human affairs. The various passions that give lustre to, or deform humanity, are exhibited, and press home upon the heart.—Where is the citizen to be found, that would not send his pupil to a representation of the London Apprentice, cost what it would? Or can there be a youth so callous, so destitute of every human feeling, as to betray his master, or fall a victim to female prostitution, when he beholds the fate of Barnwell*? Not all the powers of a Tiltonson,

* I publish the following very curious and interesting letter, at the particular request of Mr. Ross, whose natural disposition constantly directs him to acts of humanity and benevolence.

DEAR SIR,

Our conversation of yesterday evening, made such an impression on my mind, that I cannot avoid requesting you to publish the following anecdotes.—They relate so immediately to Mr. Palmer's plan, and to the commercial
and

lotson, in the sacred duties of his profession, could direct the soul to virtue with such unresisting

and mercantile interests of the metropolis, that I think it would be unjust to conceal them.

In the year 1752, during the Christmas holidays, I played George Barnwell, and the late Mrs. Pritchard played Milwood. Doctor Barrowby, physician to St. Bartholomew's hospital, told me he was sent for by a young gentleman in Great St. Helen's, apprentice to a very capital merchant. He found him very ill with a slow fever, a heavy hammer pulse, that no medicine could touch. The nurse told him he sighed at times so very heavily, that she was sure something lay heavy on his mind. The doctor sent every one out of the room, and told his patient he was sure there was something that oppressed his mind, and lay so heavy on his spirits, that it would be in vain to order him medicine, unless he would open his mind freely. After much solicitations on the part of the doctor, the youth confessed there was something lay heavy at his heart, but that he would sooner die than divulge it, as it must be his ruin if it was known. The doctor assured him, if he would make him his confidant, he would by every means in his power serve him, and that the secret, if he desired it, should remain so to all the world, but to those who might be necessary to relieve him. After much conversation, he told the doctor, he was the second son to a gentleman of good fortune in Hertfordshire; that he had made an improper acquaintance with a kept mistress of a captain of an Indiaman then abroad; that he was within a year of being out of his time, and had been entrusted with cash, draughts, and notes, which he had made free with, to the amount of two hundred pounds. That, going two or three nights before to Drury Lane, to see Ross and Mrs. Pritchard in their characters of George Barnwell and Milwood, he was so forcibly struck, he had not enjoyed a moment's peace since, and wished to die, to avoid the shame he saw hanging over him. The doctor asked where his father was? He replied, he expected him there every minute, as he was sent for by his master upon his being taken so very ill. The doctor desired the young

D

gentleman

resisting energy as the representation of such a drama.

Allegiance to our prince is a virtue of such magnitude, that we teach it to our children as a part of their religious duty. To deter mankind from perpetrating a crime, of all others the most tremendous (for surely treason is so) the immortal Shakespeare wrote:—The man who can enter the theatre, and, after contemplating the agonising tortures of Macbeth, retire a traitor, deserves to be hunted as a monster throughout the world. I will not disgrace the image of our Creator, by supposing that such a man breathes the air of heaven.

The

gentleman to make himself perfectly easy, as he would undertake his father should make all right; and, to get his patient in a promising way, assured him, if his father made the least hesitation, he should have the money of *him*. The father soon arrived. The doctor took him into another room, and, after explaining the whole cause of his son's illness, begged him to save the honour of his family, and the life of his son. The father, with tears in his eyes, gave him a thousand thanks, said he would step to his banker, and bring the money. While the father was gone, Doctor Barrowby went to his patient, and told him every thing would be settled in a few minutes, to his ease and satisfaction. That his father was gone to his banker for the money, and would soon return with peace and forgiveness, and never mention or even think of it more. What is very extraordinary, the doctor told me, that in a few minutes after he communicated this news to his patient, upon feeling of his pulse, without the help of any medicine, he was quite another creature. The father returned with notes to the amount of 200*l*. which he put into

DEDICATION.

35

The improvement of female morals is of such vast importance to every well-regulated society, and so immediately the object of every licensed theatre, that it is impossible to pass it by unnoticed. I believe it will be acknowledged, that most parents, whether they inhabit the east or the west end of the metropolis, consider the union of a daughter with a man of good morals, and good sense, as an object of the highest importance to their future peace. It is likewise pretty generally admitted, that no age produced such a swarm of unprincipled *male triflers* as the present. Men who consider the ruin of fe-

into the son's hands—they wept, kissed, embraced. The son soon recovered, and lived to be a very eminent merchant. Doctor Barrowby never told me the name, but the story he mentioned often in the green-room of Drury Lane theatre; and after telling it one night when I was standing by, he said to me, “you have done some good in your profession, more, perhaps, than many a clergyman who preached last Sunday”—for the patient told the doctor, the play raised such horror and contrition in his soul, that he would, if it would please God to raise a friend to extricate him out of that distress, dedicate the rest of his life to religion and virtue. Though I never knew his name, or saw him to my knowledge, I had for nine or ten years, at my benefit, a note sealed up with ten guineas, and these words, “*A tribute of gratitude from one who was highly obliged, and saved from ruin, by seeing Mr. Ross's performance of Barnwell.*”

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

Hampstead,
20th August 1787.

DAVID ROSS.

(Copy.)

D 2

male

male innocence as necessary to complete the character of modern gallantry, and who can plant a thorn in the pillow of an indulgent and venerable parent, without feeling even a transient emotion arising from sensibility or contrition. To protect our female relatives from these fashionable assassins, these despoilers of private tranquillity, is one great object of the drama; when a female educated in the paths of innocence, beholds the ruin that awaits the loss of it, or when she sees that an elopement or private marriage frequently subjects her to the reproaches of the very man, who tempted her to a breach of filial obedience, she becomes guarded in her conduct, she listens with caution to the addresses of our sex, and observing, in a lively representation of the scene, that a violation of the duties of a daughter, must render her an object of suspicion, when she comes to discharge the duties of a wife, is induced to repel every improper advance, with detestation and contempt.

It has been very truly observed, that most of the lower orders of the people in the city, are too much addicted to gambling, and the immoderate use of spirituous liquors. Skittle-grounds, and night-houses, tempt young men to commit excesses, that frequently terminate in the loss of character, and alas! too often on a gibbet.—Now, Sir, I am sincerely of opinion, the mind of man could not devise a method, more likely to extirpate those alarming evils,

evils, than a theatre. Remember, Sir, I am still speaking of a *licensed* theatre, where plays must be represented, under the immediate inspection and authority, of the king's servant, exercising the office of Lord Chamberlain; and where a line cannot be delivered, but what has a moral, and useful tendency. On this occasion, therefore, I will not barely say, that the youth of both sexes may be benefited by such an establishment; but I will venture to assert, that consequences beneficial in the highest degree, to every rank and character within the city jurisdiction, *must* necessarily follow. If there was a power left in the manager, to enact such pieces as he thought proper, the case would indeed be altered—a fool, or a scoundrel, might sport with the morals of the people, and do mischief with impunity; but as the law now stands, let who will be manager of the city theatre, provided it is opened under the authority of parliament, he *must* do good, he *must* serve society, let the natural cast of his disposition be what it may. I protest, Sir, I have a very high opinion of Mr. Palmer as a man; he is, I am well informed, a very affectionate husband, a very indulgent father, and a very sincere friend.—In his public character, it may be deemed superfluous to say, he stands, at this hour, the Atlas of the British Theatre. But, notwithstanding I give him every credit for the purity of his conduct, in the relative duties of a father,

and a husband, and with infinite pleasure, acknowledge his transcendent merits in the course of his profession, yet still I would not support any establishment, that vested a power in him, to act such plays as he thought proper. Indeed I would not give any private man, an uncontrolled jurisdiction in a matter of such importance to the general welfare.— If he performs under the 25th of Geo. II, it cannot be of any consequence to the public, where the power I now speak of is lodged. A burletta, a dance, a song, or a pantomime, may promote risibility, but the heart remains untouched. The representation of a play is indeed a matter that embraces consequences, highly interesting to the people; and for that reason, I would not support a theatre in the Tower hamlets, if the constable, or magistrates of that jurisdiction, could by their charter grant an uncontrolled power in this particular instance, and had delegated that power to Mr. Palmer. As to his application to parliament for an act, which must subject him to the official negative of the Lord Chamberlain, I cannot possibly conceive, that a single person living within the city-gates can have the smallest objection to it; on the contrary, I really think, that every parent and every master throughout the whole metropolis, ought to give it their warmest support.

An opposition from the patentees of Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and the Haymarket, may be expected; and yet it requires but a slender

slender portion of sagacity to foresee a disappointment, unless these gentlemen can point out to the legislature, that a theatre in Wellclose square, established by the very same authority under which they act, would be *injurious to the city of London*; and I have too high an opinion of their understandings, to suppose they would venture to assert, what the united abilities of the world could not prove.

If Mr. Palmer submits to the legislature a memorial, from the principal inhabitants residing in the Tower hamlets, and within the city jurisdiction, praying an act to authorize him to perform plays in Wellclose square, can the proprietors of the winter houses, and Mr. Colman, expect that parliament will reject such a memorial, *because they imagine* the passing of such a law would render their audiences less numerous? If a public benefit arises from a parliamentary establishment of a theatre in the city and liberties of Westminster, (and surely no man can be so absurd as to doubt it) I ask, in the name of every thing rational, why the city of London, and the multitudes inhabiting the Tower hamlets, have not a right to expect a participation?—Why should the city of York, Edinburgh, Bristol, Bath, the town of Liverpool, &c. &c. succeed in their several applications to parliament for an establishment of their theatres, and the city of London fail. —You must observe, I am supposing, that

Mr. Palmer's application to parliament will be supported by a strong memorial from the east end of the metropolis; and surely, in that case, a *possible* injury to the winter and summer managers in the west, can never be adduced as a reason why the legislature should reject it.—Let us, Sir, pursue this idea a little further.—Suppose Mr. Palmer applies to parliament for liberty to perform plays in the *summer months* at Wellclose square, and Mr. Colman was to oppose it, on the supposition that it would injure his theatre in the Haymarket (for on no other ground, weak as it is, in my opinion, can he hope for success) would not a candid senator speak to him in the following language?

“ Pray, Mr. Colman, do you mean to tell
 “ five hundred thousand of his Majesty's
 “ subjects, inhabiting a district five, and in
 “ several places six miles from your theatre,
 “ that if they are desirous of seeing a play
 “ during the summer season, they shall go to
 “ you for it?—You say, that Mr. Palmer's
 “ application, if successful, will decrease
 “ your profits: now, Sir, taking this for
 “ granted (which at best is but apocryphal)
 “ give me leave to ask you, what the citi-
 “ zens of London have to do with the re-
 “ ceipts of your theatre? or how can you
 “ suppose they will countenance your mo-
 “ nopoly, when it strikes directly at their
 “ convenience?—Besides, to speak openly,
 “ Mr. Colman, you and the winter ma-
 “ nagers

“ nagers have nauseated the public, for some
 “ years past, with such abominable trash,
 “ that our drama is in danger of losing its
 “ consequence in the opinion of all Europe.
 “ —The monopoly you are now contending
 “ for, if successful, leaves us without redress.
 “ —It may be your interest to prevent a RI-
 “ VAL, whose exertions will force you to
 “ seek for good plays, and to encourage
 “ good writers. But the very reasons that
 “ induce you to establish such a monopoly,
 “ induce me to encourage Mr. Palmer. If
 “ I had no other motive for supporting his
 “ theatre in Wellclose-square, than a desire
 “ of rescuing the Westminster theatres from
 “ their present humiliating situation, I
 “ would give Mr. Palmer my vote.—Rival-
 “ ship is ever productive of general good.
 “ I have frequently experienced, when tra-
 “ velling, the carelessness of a landlord, be-
 “ cause he knew his inn was the only one in
 “ the town. The application I leave to
 “ you.

“ When you applied for the King’s per-
 “ mission to perform plays, on the decease of
 “ Mr. Foote, would you not have considered
 “ it extremely idle in the representatives of
 “ Sir John Vanbrugh, and the people in-
 “ terested in the prosperity of the Opera-
 “ house, if they had memorialled the Sove-
 “ reign, humbly requesting him not to per-
 “ mit the Lord Chamberlain to grant you a
 “ licence, *because* it would be injurious to
 “ their

“ their property ? Such a memorial, how-
“ ever, would have at least the colour of
“ good sense to support it, as your theatre
“ stands in the very same street, and indeed
“ directly opposite to theirs. Notwith-
“ standing this, I believe you would have
“ thought it extremely severe, if his Ma-
“ jesty had refused you, on *that ground*, the
“ liberty you now enjoy ; a liberty which
“ your talents and amiable conduct through
“ life justly entitle you to. Now, Sir, con-
“ sider for a moment the nature and extent
“ of your present opposition.—You oppose
“ an act to license a theatre (which by the
“ bye is at no less a distance than five miles
“ from yours), although it is extremely pro-
“ bable, that *ninety* people out of every *hun-*
“ *dred* that would frequent it, never saw
“ your theatre in the whole course of their
“ lives, or would visit it if they lived to the
“ age of old Parr. In a word, Sir, you
“ desire a MONOPOLY OF THE
“ WHOLE METROPOLIS, extend-
“ ing from Knightsbridge to Blackwall,
“ during the summer months, and expect
“ the legislature to countenance it. — You
“ should remember, Mr. Colman, that an
“ opposition on such grounds is an insult to
“ the citizens; and that they are in posses-
“ sion of *two facts*, that would determine
“ their conduct on this occasion, if their
“ pride and convenience were not con-
“ cerned.—The first is, that your theatre
“ cost

“ cost you but half a year’s annuity to Mr.
 “ Foote, amounting to 700*l.*; and the second
 “ —that Mr. Palmer, and his friends, have
 “ already expended rather more than FOUR-
 “ TEEN THOUSAND.”

These observations, Sir, in my opinion, must fix the public mind, as to any opposition from Mr. Colman.—He may indeed, in conjunction with the winter managers, exert all his influence with the members of the house of commons separately, to defeat a memorial in support of Mr. Palmer’s application; but those very gentlemen, when sitting in their legislative capacity, must have a better reason for rejecting the wishes of a respectable number of the citizens, than a *possible* injury to his theatre. The minister, Sir, when this matter comes to be agitated in parliament, will first consider, what PUBLIC GOOD is likely to arise from such an establishment in the Tower hamlets, and this consideration will lead him directly to a numerous detail of facts, that must at once settle his conduct with respect to Mr. Palmer’s application.—It is generally known, that on the spot where the new theatre stands, and indeed for a considerable distance to the westward of it, nothing could be seen, but the most abject dwellings, most of them occupied by idle and disorderly people, whose nightly depredations on the inhabitants, have long been a subject of complaint. These evils must be effectually prevented, if
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the legislature gives Mr. Palmer's theatre the sanction of an act of parliament, as the neighbourhood, it is universally said, will be improved in a stile equal to the new buildings in the vicinity of the Minorities. Even at this hour ground-rents have been raised very considerably in the neighbourhood of Wellclose-square, and in consequence of applications from various people, that are desirous of building in the neighbourhood of the theatre. Now, Sir, I beg of you to consider, what an immense property must be engaged in these undertakings—how considerably the revenue must be increased, not only in consequence of the thousands that must be spent in excursions to the theatre, but from the regular payment of the King's taxes, and how every trade and occupation, in that part of the metropolis, must be necessarily benefited. These, Sir, are not imaginary consequences; for there is not an individual, throughout the whole district of the Tower hamlets, but what knows them to be facts, nor, I believe, is there a respectable person in that liberty but what will signify it to parliament.—Under what pretence, then, can the proprietors of the winter theatres, or Mr. Colman, suppose, that Mr. Pitt, or any member of the British legislature, will countenance their opposition?—It is, in fact, requesting parliament to refuse an increase of his Majesty's revenue, amounting, on the most moderate computation, to THREE THOUSAND POUNDS annually.

annually, and not to pass an act, that must improve a part of the metropolis, where at least TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE constantly reside, and where money circulates daily to an amount almost incredible.

Throughout the whole of this business, Mr. Palmer's conduct really interests the whole metropolis in his behalf; it speaks the language of ingenuoufness, beyond all controversy or cavil. On the outset of Mr. Palmer's undertaking, he made this declaration, " I will first build a theatre, " that every individual may judge, from " ocular demonstration, whether as an edi- " fice it merits the countenance and sup- " port, or the contempt of the city. I " will not apply for an act of parliament " through any other medium than the city " of London, and the citizens SHALL FIRST " SEE what they recommend. I will " venture every thing that can be dear to " me in this life on the good-sense and li- " berality of my fellow-citizens, and I will " begin my endeavours at an expence of " FOURTEEN THOUSAND POUNDS."

Now really, Sir, Mr. Palmer hath not only *said*, but he hath *done* all this. He hath circulated a very large sum of money in that part of the metropolis; and the city, by supporting his application to parliament, will circulate a vast sum annually WITHIN THEIR OWN GATES. These, Sir, are very serious truths, and no doubt will have their proper

proper weight.—Mr. Colman, and the winter managers, wish to get the city money; but, if we except the toll on Blackfryars-bridge, which they may occasionally pay, I fancy, they do not circulate the value of a single hogthead of claret within the city walls, from the first day of January to the last of December.

Let us now, Sir, indulge in an excursion that may lead us to something eventually serviceable to Mr. Palmer, although not immediately relevant to our former subject.—You are the friend of this gentleman, because you are acquainted with his liberality and worth. I know what he is at present, but I cannot say what an act of parliament may do with him.—Instances are not wanting to prove, that men truly amiable in private life, have rendered themselves extremely obnoxious, and what is, if possible, much worse, extremely contemptible, by getting possession of a theatre established by patent. It is a received opinion with such people, that as a theatre subjects the manager to the importunate solicitations of every dramatic trifler, and likewise to the ambition and perpetual manœuvrings of the actors behind the curtain, that TRICK and FINESSE are necessary in the direction of the stage. It is true, that in the mimic world, great talents are necessary to conduct a manager sensibly and honourably through his office. He ought to possess a very comprehensive

hensive mind; he should be an elegant scholar, and perfectly acquainted with the beauties of dramatic poetry; he should be capable of contemplating in his closet, the bearable duration of a scene, and fitting each part to the natural capabilities of the performers: he should have firmness to reject the solicitations of dulness, although supported by affluence or nobility, and the politeness of a gentleman to render such a disappointment as easy to the writer as possible. He should rescue sterling genius from the oblivion of poverty, and thereby raise to himself a monument of fame, and a fortune both affluent and honourable: he should consider, that, notwithstanding the patent is his property according to the *laws* of England, in *equity* it belongs to the genius of the people. A man gifted with such talents, and possessed of such accomplishments, would despise cunning, artifice, or intrigue, as disgraceful, and indeed unnecessary.—That Mr. Palmer possesses many cardinal requisites to form an excellent director of the English stage, no man that knows his uncommon versatility of talent, and his unaffected demeanor to all ranks of people, can possibly deny. But *if* he is betrayed into an opinion, that duplicity, instead of frankness, becomes necessary to his situation; *if* he rejects the services of an actor possessing ability, because he may tread on his heels, and divide with him the public favour; *if* he says to all authors,

authors, indiscriminately, Send me your pieces, and if I approve them they shall be represented; and *if*, upon this apparent shew of impartiality, he possesses himself of some pieces of intrinsic merit, gets them transcribed, and returns the original copies to the authors of them, with this very laconic answer, THEY WON'T DO.—*If* he engages a dramatic cobbler at a salary to alter them, and afterwards descends to such an abominable roguery, as to represent the very scenes that received the managerial negative, for the private emolument of himself, but under the public avowal, that his dependant is the writer; and what is still more reprehensible, *if*, when the author of a *condemned* piece tells him, “ Mr. Palmer, your *house-*
“ *bold friend* hath really disfigured my play;
“ this species of manœuvring, Mr. Palmer,
“ will neither conduct you honourably or
“ profitably through life;” and *if* he, in consequence of this address, manufactures a face of the utmost astonishment, declares he is miserable, that any man could imagine him guilty of such abominable practices; then, lighting up his countenance, and forming a smile of the most bewitching complacency, retails the hacknied observation, that
“ *two people may pop upon the same idea.*”—
If Mr. Palmer is compelled, by the *weighty interest* of an author, to perform a *good play*, and that he cannot get possession of the copy, for the purposes *aforesaid*, and feeling
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the disappointment, gives what is called the *scene whisper* to the performer, on whose exertions the author principally rests for support; and *if* the actor, feeling as a man of integrity, pretends not to understand *the hint*, but goes through the part with honour and success; and *if*, in consequence of this upright behaviour in the actor, Mr. Palmer tells him that he cannot be employed, "*because he is no friend to the party.*"—In short, Sir, *if* Mr. Palmer, in consequence of his obtaining an act of parliament, and which must of course introduce him to men of letters, becomes the reverse of what nature made him, and what application hath long since polished; *if*, instead of an ingenuous, intelligent, and honourable conduct, he adopts a system replete with fraud, folly, and hypocrisy—he will soon find a blight in the summer of his hopes, which even the indulgence of our legislature cannot cure.

The citizens of London, Sir, have long been distinguished for a pre-eminence in *plain-dealing*;—an open, liberal, and faithful discharge of public or private duty is sure to be supported within the gates of the metropolis; the contrary is scouted as contagious. The manager of a theatre in the city, established by law, may entrap unsuspecting genius, and dole out pilfered ideas to fill his treasury; but the resentment of a single man of ability would be fatal to him,

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He would rouse the resentment of a people, educated in the strictest principles of rectitude, and then indeed he might say, in the language of Wolsey, "farewel, a long farewel to all my greatness."

These ideas, Sir, are thrown together with very little attention to regularity, but with the most ardent and heartfelt desire of serving Mr. Palmer, whose application to parliament for an act, I have reason to think, will be supported by every liberal citizen. Mr. Palmer will shew his good sense, if he takes for his model a gentleman now living, who for some years past has had the direction of the musical department, and is also a proprietor of Drury Lane theatre. In contemplating the character of Mr. Linley, he will perceive how excellence may live, even in these days of envy and malevolence, without a single foe. That Mr. Palmer may, by a similar conduct, enjoy the good opinion, and of course the support, of his fellow-citizens, is my most sincere wish.— I wish it, because his natural endowments are admirable, and because it will secure to an amiable and virtuous wife, and to a numerous and beautiful progeny, the comforts of independence, without which, the condition of human life is not worth a sigh.

As dramatic entertainments are your chief amusement, it follows, that you cannot be indifferent to the present situation of our stage. This consideration will induce me,

at a future day, to trouble you with another dedication. I have for some time past employed my leisure hours in sketching out what I intend to call a complete HISTORY OF THE LIVING ACTORS. In this work I shall give you the progress of theatrical monopoly in England since the days of Sir Richard Steel, and endeavour to point out some defects, that strike directly at the genius of our country, and which may be very easily remedied by the legislature. As I shall be assisted by two, if not three of the most distinguished gentlemen in the republic of letters, I shall venture to recommend the book as containing matter highly deserving your consideration.

I have, Sir, in the course of this address, endeavoured to shew you, that Mr. Palmer hath acted hitherto as a good citizen, and that a theatre in Wellclose square, established under the authority of parliament, must produce the most salutary consequences, not only to the city of London, but to government. Give me leave now, Sir, to submit a few observations to your consideration, on the *disgraceful, cruel, unjust, and impolitic* tendency of the several acts of parliament that respect the professional character of an actor. I have before given you a genuine history of the 10th and 17th of Geo. II. and from thence you must perceive, that Sir Robert Walpole's intention was to strike at the root of all theatrical exhibitions in this

kingdom, by making the profession of an actor disgraceful. That he should perpetrate such a murder upon genius is a lamentable idea; and when we consider that he really possessed from nature a liberal disposition, cannot (if we except the provocations he received from the representation of Fielding's *Pasquin*, and other personal attacks) be accounted for upon any rational principle. But is it not surprising, that since Sir Robert Walpole's demise, no generous or liberal senator hath moved to expunge those disgraceful records from our statute-books? If we consider the requisites that are necessary to the completion of a good actor, we shall indeed wonder that talents so brilliant and extensive, so delightful and useful in their progress, could in *any case*, where the exercise of them is called forth, subject the possessor to the detested epithet of VAGRANT. An actor, Sir, if he hath a station in the file, must possess a sound and extensive understanding;—he must be gifted with genius and fancy to accompany his author into the divine regions of dramatic poesy;—he must have a voice, sonorous, flexible, and melodious; a countenance, expressive of all the various passions that render human nature amiable or terrific; and a person, if possible, without a blemish.—Now, Sir, observe, what an enraged minister and an act of parliament have done with such a character. If he errs against this
detested

detested statute, in other words, if he performs a part (every line of which shall inculcate the glorious precepts of virtue and benevolence) in a theatre not licensed, he is liable to be seized by the iron hand of a ruffian constable, and dragged to a dungeon as a *sturdy beggar*, a *vagrant*, a *rogue*, and a *vagabond* *. Nay, Sir, to such extraordinary lengths hath this obnoxious law been carried, that a performer belonging to Mr. Palmer's theatre was lately committed to prison, for *saying* instead of *singing* the words, *O the roast beef of old England*. The magistrate's adjudication, on this memorable occasion, ought to be recorded; it ran thus, "I JUDGE you to be a *rogue*, a *WAGRANT*, "and a *WAGABONE*, within the intent and "meaning of the 17th of Geo. II, and I com- "mit you to the house of correction for the "term of fourteen days." But still he was a magistrate, and his commitment took effect.

* A certain magistrate lately declared, that if he was a justice of peace for Birmingham, he would have committed Mrs. Siddons as a *wagabone*, for acting in the theatre belonging to that town, as she performed contrary to the ACT. Pray (says a comedian who was standing by) do you consider Mrs. Siddons, when on the stage at Birmingham, a *wagabone*. Certainly I do, replies the magistrate; all I can say for her is, "*she is a respectable wagabone*." — Why *respectable*, says the comedian? "Because," (answers the justice in a passion) "because, "because, why because, she read a play before the king."

We have been told very lately (what we all knew before) that the only way to make the stage respectable, is to protect it by the laws. This is a truth unquestionable; but when I am informed, at the same moment, that an actor on the stage in Covent Garden is a *gentleman*, and on the stage in Wellclose square is a sturdy beggar, a rogue, and, as the sapient magistrate expressed it, a *wagrant*, and a *wagabone*, I protest, Sir, I cannot but express my concern, that the laws of this enlightened nation could in any case inform me, that what I have been told is true. If an actor, by changing his locality, errs against any statute passed for the good government of the drama, punish him. But still I must contend, that by placing him on the same humiliating footing, the statute of Queen Anne placed *bearwards*, *fencers*, and other *wandering miscreants*, the legislature do not act liberally, honestly, or wisely. The greatest men of all ages, and all countries, both for learning and wisdom, have constantly attended the theatres. *Cicero* saw his *Roscus* with transport, *Lord Mansfield* saw his *Garrick* with delight. And yet, if *Garrick* was now living, and had been guilty of playing *Lear* in Wellclose square, the laws of this country would authorize Mr. Justice Staples to commit him to the house of correction, as a rogue, a *wagrant*, and a *wagabone*. In truth, Sir, there evidently appears in all these acts of parliament, when-
ever

ever they touch upon the employment of an actor, a malignant and vindictive spirit—a pitiful and skulking policy, that would undermine dramatic genius by striking at the poet's best support.—But in these days of science, the actors surely cannot want a friend. Come forward, MR. SHERIDAN, and move for a repeal of those laws that have stamp'd your old friends with the detested appellations of *vagrant* and *vagabond*. Shew the world you have not suffered by the *ethicks* of St. Stephen's Chapel, but that you can remember *past services* with gratitude and liberality. You have *fallen* indeed from the *poet* to the *statesman*, but still you possess the means of rendering this substantial justice to the drama of your country. Remember, Sir, there was a time you looked to these *sturdy beggars* for support. Your dramatic labours, without the vivifying energy of the stage, must have suffered through the cold medium of the closet, and of course retarded your progress to fame and fortune. These observations methinks, Sir, ought to have weight with Mr. Sheridan; but I despair of his assistance, for, notwithstanding the public know he is equal to any thing, it is as generally known he minds nothing. The actors, however, are not without the means of redress. There lives a nobleman, gifted with talents that we must look up to with admiration, and who possesses a heart where liberality and goodness have long resided.—In the MAR-

QUIS OF CARMARTHEN, Sir, we behold the minister, and the friend — the peer, and the man of virtue — the gentleman, and the classic — the statesman, and the man of feeling. — In him, Sir, we behold abilities, though brilliant and excursive, yet so perfectly under the controul of judgment and sensibility, that our respect for him, is not the cold effect of custom or formality, but the warm and genuine tribute of our affections. — In his hours of relaxation, we find him the constant companion of modest merit, and secretly rescuing from the icy hand of poverty, the man of worth, genius, and erudition. To this nobleman, Sir, the actors may look up for a speedy and effectual redress. — If they knock at *his* door, he will *be at home* to their complaints.

You must now, Sir, perceive, I have written a tolerable-sized octavo volume, as a *dedication* to a burletta of two acts only. The best apology I can make for writing so much, is, that I was writing to you, and when that is the case, I really do not know when to stop. The poem, or burletta, call it what you will, that I now submit to your censure or approbation, is certainly entitled to your indulgence, as I can assure you it was written and fairly transcribed in *six days*. The worthy manager requested of me to write something for him *within the statute*, and I thought poor *Hero* and *Leander* might be introduced to the public, without being considered

DEDICATION. 57

considered by Mr. Justice Staples as either *wagrants* or *wagabones*.

The story of these unfortunate lovers is so well known, that it would be superfluous to relate it at present. In fitting it for the stage, I was under a necessity of making their attachments honourable, which you know have been described otherwise. Leander's swimming over the Hellespont would have had a good effect in the theatre, during the time he was in the water; but as I could not decently bring him on the stage without his habiliments, or dress him in time behind the curtain, I put him into a boat at once.—The light that conducted him to the object of his desires is a part of the legend I have preserved; but the bashaw of *three tails* (which the audience may suppose a gentleman of *Irish* extraction), belongs to me. I did intend to souse Leander in the waves, as a part of the old romance, and to have a requiem sung over his manes; but that wicked wit of your acquaintance, *Mr. T. Vaughan*, told me, that such a denouement would be *tragedy* direct, and against the law, as laid down by *Mr. Bearcroft*.—I was therefore obliged to marry them, according to the several statutes in that case made and provided, and to leave them afterwards to the mercy of the public.

The scenery of this little piece, which was executed by Mr. Dixon, is beyond all description beautiful.—This artist hath burst
upon

upon the public with such astonishing powers, that he distances every competitor. — His knowledge of stage effect, the best judges positively declare, surpasses even the genius of our favourite Louthburgh.

Mr. Reeves, principal musician to Mr. Palmer's theatre, composed the music of this burletta, and, if I may be allowed to judge of this young gentleman's future advances, by what he has done on the present occasion, I shall not hesitate to declare, that he will be at the head of his profession in the course of a very few years. — He possesses the happy talent of enforcing the sense of his author by the "concord of sweet sounds," and in a degree of the highest excellence. — This, Sir, I believe, is the great secret of his art. — It is hardly necessary to add, that the band did great justice to the composer, as it is under the direction of Mr. Hindmarsh.

You will find, by turning to the dramatis personæ, that Mr. Bannister (himself a host), Mr. W. Palmer, Mr. Arrowsmith, Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Burnet, Miss Burnet, and that enchanting little warbler Master Braham, were the leading performers, and this will instantly account for the very favourable reception of **HERO AND LEANDER**.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your ever faithful

and affectionate friend,

The AUTHOR.

HERO AND LEANDER,

A

BURLETTA,

IN TWO ACTS.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

ROYALTY THEATRE,

GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

Tu, quid ego & populus mecum desideret, audi.

HOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

ABUDAH	—	MR. W. PALMER.
DELAH	—	MR. CHAMBERS.
LEANDER	—	MR. ARROWSMITH.
HYMEN	—	MASTER BRAHAM.
SOLANO	—	MR. BANNISTER.

Soldiers, Labouring People, Men and Women.

W O M E N.

HERO	—	MRS. FOX.
SAPRINA	—	MRS. BURNET.
MINERVA	—	MISS BURNET.

SCENE—the Banks of the Hellespont.

TIME—Sun-rise.

HERO and LEANDER.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

First.—*A harvest scene, at sun-rise, on the banks of the Hellespont.—Turkish husbandmen at work, their wives employed at the same time.—A perspective view of the Castle of Abydos in Natolia or the Lesser Asia—the Hellespont appearing to divide the two countries.*

Solano, Safrina, Hero—*Labouring Men and Women.*

CHORUS.

ALL hail the chearful god of day,
Parent of every human bliss;
Who (ere he wings his heav'nly way)
Salutes his Thetis with a kiss.

SAFRINA.

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SAFRINA.

*See how creation smiles around;
What melody enchants the grove!*

HERO.

*'Tis there the voice of nature's found
Responsive to the note of love.*

CHORUS.

All hail, &c.

SOLANO.

Well done, my lads—The morning seems to
low'r;

In yonder cloud, methinks I view a show'r:
Bind up the corn, harness all the cattle,
And let the women quit their idle prattle;
Those lazy sluts are constantly a gadding;
'Tis such as you, that set the fellows madding.

HERO.

Behold Aurora, with a blushing ray,
And rosy fingers, spreads the infant day!

SONG. HERO.

*Ere yet Aurora chase the dews,
The lark his matin song renews;
And seems to chide the swains delay,
To lose so sweet a part of day.*

II.

*See from the ground his mate arise,
And seems to mock our wond'ring eyes;
Still as she soars her notes decay,
Till the faint warblings die away.*

SOLANO.

Well, Safrina, what's the matter now?

SAFRINA.

HERO AND LEANDER. 63

SAFRINA.

There sits, alas! on gentle Hero's brow
A settled grief.

SOLANO.

Plha! I know the reason;
Hero's nineteen, and that, you know 's the
season
When females would be married, if they could.

SAFRINA.

Well, what of that? are we not flesh and blood?

SONG. SAFRINA.

*When I was young, I danc'd and sung,
My heart was lighter than a fly;
No care my youthful bosom stung,
At ev'ry rout, pray who but I?*

II.

*At length the urchin bent his bow,
The vagrant arrow hit the mark;
But Hymen, 'solv'd his skill to show,
Cur'd poor Safrina in the dark.*

SOLANO.

Well done, Safrina; foregad we all can tell,
There was a time, you bore away the bell.

*[A peal of thunder.—Sky appears overcast.
—Exeunt Safrina and Hero.]*

SOLANO.

Away, my lads—the storm is drawing near—
And save the produce of a fruitful year.

[A peal of thunder, accompanied with lightning.]

SOLANO.

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SOLANO.

Well done, my boys!—The clouds are all on
fire;

A thunder-bolt hath struck the village spire.

[A peal of thunder, lightning, rain, &c.]

SOLANO.

The hills are wrapt in stormy clouds on high,
And feel the dread convulsion of the sky;

Tempests arise, on fortune's ocean low'r,

And rolling billows lash th' affrighted shore.

*[Tempest rages; a man, standing on a
rock, cries out—]*

MAN.

A ship, a ship! 'twixt sea and wind she strives.

SOLANO.

Fly all, fly all, and save the people's lives.

SONG. SOLANO.

Alas, how chang'd the face of things—

[Thunder and lightning.]

Hark, hark, the howling tempest sings;

Ab, now! the rebel winds she feels,

Toss'd on the billows, how she reels!

II.

She's now a wreck—behold on high,

[Thunders.]

Exploded thunder rends the sky;

A dread convulsion moves the shore,

And rocks the deep, unmov'd before.

[The

HERO AND LEANDER. 65

[*The crew now appear landing—thunder and lightning—music descriptive of the elemental warfare—storm gradually decreases—Leander disguised.*]

SOLANO.

Welcome on shore, Sir, whether friend or foe,
All are our brothers in this scene of woe.

LEANDER.

Thanks to you, gentle friends; and, Sir, to you
Our constant prayers are ever, ever due;
May all the powers divine your labours bless,
And send you friends, if ever in distress!

SOLANO.

What means that sigh? ah, tell me, gentle
youth;
You seem the child of honour, and of truth;
Banish your cares, for see the God of light
Dispels the gloom, that wrapp'd the world in
night.

LEANDER.

Stern Boreas, frowning, now forsakes the plain,
And smiling Nature visits us again;
Each tree its wonted foliage re-assumes,
And new-born zephyrs breathe around per-
fumes.
Where'er we turn to view, our ravish'd eyes,
Luxuriant scenes of endless beauty rise.

SONG. LEANDER.

*Transparent now, and all serene,
The gentle current flows;
While fancy draws the flatt'ring scene,
How fair the landscape shows!*

F

II. But

66 HERO AND LEANDER.

II.

*But soon its transient charms decay,
When ruffling tempests blow;
The soft delusions fleet away,
And pleasure ends in woe.*

SOLANO.

Tell me, gentle Sir, from whence you came;
Declare your sovereign, country, and your
name;
Are ye from Natolia's rebel coast?
If that be so, 'twere better you were lost.

[Trumpet without.

The chief is rous'd: behold him great in arms;
Let Hero now subdue him with her charms:
From yonder mountain's brow he saw your sails;
Dreadful he is—a bashaw of three tails.

Music plays—"See the conquering hero comes."

Enter Abudah on an elephant, attended by a numerous body of guards armed with spears.

ABUDAH.

What's this I see?—a set of rascal minions,
Hanging together, like a bunch of onions.—
I'll hang ye all, aye, scoundrels, before night,
If on the instant you don't quit my sight.

SOLANO.

Dread Sir, we have got some prisoners here,
That seem half dead already with their fear;
Shipwreck'd upon our coast, we sav'd their
lives,

And here they are——

ABUDAH.

HERO AND LEANDER. 67

ABUDAH.

Say, have they any wives?
The women all are mine—yes, if twenty,
Altho' indeed I've petticoats in plenty.

SOLANO.

We found no female, Sir, among the crew;
Shall we discharge the men—pray what say
you?

ABUDAH.

Let them all breakfast, [Prisoners bow.
Each a loaf of bread, [Prisoners bow.
And then let ev'ry prisoner [Prisoners bow,
Lose his head.

CHORUS. PRISONERS.

[Leander stands unmov'd.]

Have pity, great Chief,
And send us relief;
We're all in a wretched condition!
O spare our poor lives,
And we'll send you our wives;
Accept this our humble petition!

[During this chorus, Abudah alights.

ABUDAH.

Silence, rascals!—I find you then can prate,
But, scoundrels, you shall know my word is
fate.

My sword shall treat the vultures with a feast;
Shall lay whole realms, nay, human nature
waste.

68 HERO AND LEANDER.

SOLANO.

I told them, Sir, how great you was in pow'r,
That with a single puff you'd rock a tower;
That you were ten feet high—was not that
right?

ABUDAH.

Ten feet at least—five cubits—No—not quite:
Yet ev'ry inch is made of proper stuff,
Tho' idle nature cast me in the rough.

SONG. ABUDAH. [Tune Durling.]

*Stand all aloof, ye paltry jades,
And you, ye filthy knave of spades;
How dare you look beyond those pales,
On me, who wear three thumping tails?
Don't you all know, that at a blow,
I'd send you to the shades below?
Begone, or else I swear, odsbobs,
I'll send you home without your knobs.*

Enter Hero.

*But Hero now her form displays,
And strives to charm a thousand ways;
From head to foot new modes of dress,
Her various arts to please express:
I find I'm caught within the snare,
So I'll enjoy the am'rous fair;
As I'm a soldier great and stout,
This girl hath turn'd me inside out.*

[Hero and Leander look stedfastly at each other.]

LEANDER.

It is, it is my love!—Ye gods, be kind! [*Aside.*]

HERO.

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HERO.

'Tis he—I give my sorrows to the wind. [*Aside.*

ABUDAH.

What does the fellow stare at?—Speak, you dog.
The rascal seems as stupid as a log.

LEANDER.

Spare your reproaches, Sir; I'm ill at ease,
My life is yours, do with me as you please.
See tear succeeds to tear—a passage seeks,

[*Aside.*

And bursting forth, bedews her lovely cheeks!

ABUDAH.

No grumbling, firrah.—Charmer, let's retire,

[*Takes Hero by the hand.*

The god of love shall fan the keen desire;
My body, blood, and guts are all on fire.

[*Going.*

LEANDER.

Monster, avaunt!—Release the heavenly fair,
Or, by all the avenging powers, I swear—

[*Seizes Abudah.*

ABUDAH.

Seize, seize the villain; drag him to the block,
Or toss him headlong from the steepest rock,
No, off with his head.—As I'm a finner,
I'll have his knob, before I eat my dinner.

HERO.

Mercy, O mercy, Sir, as you are great!
O save the youth, at least suspend his fate!

ABUDAH.

Who is the vagabond?

F 3

LEANDER.

70 HERO AND LEANDER.

LEANDER.

Why, Caitiff, hear,
So shall thy savage nature shake with fear :
Know then, Ingrate, from Abydos I came ;
Still more ; know thou, Leander is my name.
[*Throws off his disguise.*
Now slip thy bloodhounds—'dulge the savage
rout ;
I stand unmov'd.

ABUDAH.

O now the murder's out.—
Thanks to thee, Prophet, thanks to thee again.
—Speak not in his behalf, you sue in vain ;
This is the squire, that braves the Hellespont,
And steals at night to madam Hotupon't.
Zounds ! I'll fouse him in a tub of pickle ;
And as to Miss, her toby I will tickle.
Drag him away.

TRIO. HERO.

Great chief, be not cruel, but good as you're brave,
Remember, the hero but conquers to save.

SOLANO.

Give life to the wretched, whose fate's in your
hand ;
'Tis humanity graces and blesses the land.

LEANDER.

I sue not for mercy—I stand here unmov'd,
Protected by virtue, by beauty, and love.

ALL.

Look down, O ye gods, and let mortals now prove,
The blessings that wait upon virtue and love.

HERO.

HERO AND LEANDER. 71

HERO.

Hear me, great Sir—O spare Leander's life,
Grant this request, and Hero is your wife.

SOLANO.

Say, will your actions with your words accord?

HERO.

They will indeed.

SOLANO.

Then take her at her word.

LEANDER.

I read my Hero's meaning in her eyes. [*Aside.*

ABUDAH.

It is all flummery.—By heaven he dies.

HERO.

Pardon me, Sir, my love for you prevails,
What girl can stand, a bashaw with three tails?
[*Coaxes him.*

SONG. HERO. [*Tune Paddy Whack.*]

O, Sir, be consenting, be kind, and relenting,
Release these poor creatures, and send them away.
Do but this; and you'll find
How good-natur'd and kind
I'll prove to my spousee, by night and by day.

II.

O come now, sweet lover, a passion discover,
A sly little Cupid now lurks in that smile.
Ev'ry maid must surrender
To such a commander,
You've found out a way my poor heart to beguile.

F 4

III. Behold,

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III.

*Behold, like Apollo, his ringlets of yellow !
Behold how like Mars, at this moment he stands !
His breath too discloses
The perfume of roses !
How plump his round cheeks, and how taper his
hands !*

O come now, sweet lover. (Second stanza repeated.)

ABUDAH.

A pretty soul it is !—Say, will you, Miss,
Give your bashaw the earnest of a kiss.

[Kisses him.]

'Tis done ! 'tis done ! — you're pardon'd, rascals—go,

I give you life, my love will have it so.
But if that poaching dog comes here again,
And braves my anger, as he braves the main,
I'll whip the rebel rascal, till he's blind.—
Be scarce then, scoundrels, now you know my
mind.

CHORUS. PRISONERS.

*Happy, happy, happy day ;
Ev'ry heart its homage pay.*

CHORUS. BY THE TURKS.

*Wake to harmony the voice,
Rejoice, 'tis mercy calls, rejoice.*

*[During this Chorus, Abudah mounts the
Elephant—he first places his foot on the
shoulder of a slave, who kneels and
raises him gently, until Abudah vaults
into the saddle.]*

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CHORUS. ALL.

*Happy, happy, happy day,
Ev'ry heart its homage pay;
Wake to harmony the voice,
Rejoice, 'tis mercy calls, rejoice.*

A C T

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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A C T II.

SCENE, *A Grove.*

Enter Abudah, Solano, Safrina, and Hero.

ABUDAH.

COME, come, Solano, methinks we tarry,
I shall be a-gog, until I marry.
The loves in council sit, and from above,
Venus now calls me to the Paphian grove.

SOLANO.

What says my gentle Hero, will you go?

SAFRINA.

Her heart seems bursting with its grief.

HERO.

Heigh ho!

SAFRINA.

Divide your sorrows, Hero; give me part.
Suppress that sigh—or else you'll break my
heart.

SONG.

HERO AND LEANDER. 75

SONG. SAFRINA.

*Alas ! I press'd, with growing love,
This darling to my breast ;
Not the most favour'd, e'en above,
Was more completely bless'd.*

II.

*Dear innocent ! her lovely smiles
Delight me but to view ;
And ev'ry pang my Hero feels,
Her mother feels it too.*

ABUDAH.

*I see she's coy, yet love is in her eye,
She'll know her bashaw better by and by ;
Come, Hero, I hope there's no repenting,
The gods, my pretty chicken—are consenting.*

SONG. ABUDAH.

*Gentle Hero ! take my hand,
Love and life's at my command,
Joys surrounding,
Sorrows drowning,
Bliss shall gladden all the land.
But if you refuse me,
And think but to noose me
In love's silken fetters,
And sneer at your betters,
By the gods now I swear,
From your bosom I'll tear—
No, stop—I'll do more,
I'll deluge the shore,
With blood—
Till nature looks wild,*

And

76 HERO AND LEANDER.

*And before I retire,
I'll kindle a fire,
That shall toast you,
And roast you,
Man, woman, and child.*

S A F R I N A.

O mercy on us! whither shall we fly?

S O L A N O.

He'll ravish you, perhaps.

S A F R I N A.

No, first I'll die.

[Exeunt Safrina and Hero.]

[Huzza without.]

Enter Delah and Soldiers.

A B U D A H,

What's the matter, Delah?

D E L A H.

Dread Sir, attend—

We've seen a sail—I'm sure she's not a friend—
Hovering on our coast; she's full of people.
I saw her first, great Sir, from yonder steeple.

A B U D A H.

Rally my forces—instant line the strand;
They're rebel rascals, from Natolia's land.

[Exit Delah. Soldiers remain.]

[Huzza without.]

Like Mars, I'll dart my javelin from my car,
I scorn to wait, I'll meet the coming war.

[Going.]

[Trumpet sounds without.]

S O L A N O.

HERO AND LEANDER. 77

SOLANO.

Fir'd by the sound, my genius bids me go,
To share the conflict, and repel the foe.

SONG. SOLANO.

*Hark! the trumpet sounds afar,
The clam'rous harbinger of war;
Rouse, soldiers, rouse, to arms, to arms,
The call my beating bosom warms;
The foe insults our native shore,
And proudly mocks his conqueror.*

AIR.

*O, genius of this happy land,
Descend! and bless thy chosen band;
Give us to meet the daring foe,
'Tis liberty shall nerve the blow.*

II.

*So, when the toils of war are o'er,
And meek-eyed peace unlocks her store,
Each youthful hero then shall prove,
A sweet reward in faithful love.*

Enter Delah.

DELAH.

Dread, Sir, a prisoner we have taken.

ABUDAH.

Off with his head—I'll make the fellow bacon.

DELAH.

If you unhead him, Sir, he cannot speak.

ABUDAH.

What horrid fear sits trembling on thy cheek?

DELAH.

I find Leander, Sir, comes here to-night,
To visit Hero, and secure her flight.

ABUDAH.

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A B U D A H.

Death and the devil!—this is news indeed—
O for Bellona's whip, to make him bleed!
He should be more than twenty months in dy-
ing,

'Twould make me smile to see the rascal frying.

SOLANO.

Suppose we feize him as he comes to-night,
Waylay the villain—nab him?

ABUDAH.

That is right.
You counsel well, Solano—Come away,
My soul's in arms, and eager for its prey.
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

A Night Scene.

The Hellespont in perspective.—Leander is seen rowing himself over.—A candle appears in Hero's window, as a direction to her lover.

Enter Abudah, Solano, and Soldiers.

SOLANO.

Behold him, Sir!—his fate, alas! draws nigh,
And forces e'en the tribute of a sigh.
Like the dread genius of the deep, he steers,
Nor shuns the labour, nor the danger fears.

SONG. SOLANO.

O see how he comes, how he moves thro' the gloom,
Conducted by fate, and by love, to his doom!
O see the fond youth, to the shore now he bends,
And quits his companions, his country, and friends;
Regardless

HERO AND LEANDER. 79

*Regardless of danger, he darts thro' the wave,
'Tis nature commands him, and nature must save.*

ABUDAH.

The fellow's got on shore, he'll soon be here;
The light conducts him, to my faithless fair.
O here he comes—be silent all as death,
Let not a creature speak, above his breath.

Enter Leander.

LEANDER.

Well, so far safe—I now must wait to see
The bright perfection of a deity.
O do not, cruel love, my cares prolong!
I'll wake my gentle Hero with a song.

SONG. LEANDER. [Tune Langolee.]

*Awake, my sweet Hero, my heart's dearest treasure,
Leander now calls you to love and delight;
'Tis Hymen shall sanctify love's softest pleasure,
Give our days all to joy, and to rapture the night.
Awake then, my charmer, and share the sweet
 blessing,
The moments now fly me, alas! how distressing;
O think of our joys, when care's'd and caressing,
Arise, my sweet Hero, love calls you away.*

[Hero opens the window.]

HERO.

O my soul's joy! thy cheering voice I hear,
Like notes from seraphs, rushing on my ear.

LEANDER.

O come, my Hero, bless again my arms,
My heart, still constant, beats with love's alarms;
Danger

80 HERO AND LEANDER.

Danger could work no change, nor time remove
The honest warmth of undissembled love.
Haste then, sweet fair, thy lover's transport meet,
Fly to his arms, and make his bliss complete.

[Hero *shuts the window.*

That heaven from which no secret is conceal'd,
But ev'ry wish and thought must stand reveal'd,
Views not a love more pure, or truer mind,
Amongst the various race of human kind,
Where neither int'rest nor design have part,
But all the warmth is native of the heart.

Enter Hero. Leander embraces her.

LEANDER.

O blest event!—let's fly to yonder shore,
We've met, my Hero, now, to part no more.
Hail, happy groves, retreats of peace and joy,
Where no black cares the mind's repose destroy!

HERO.

Discharg'd from care, on unfrequented plains,
We'll sing of rural joys, in rural strains;
No false corrupt delights our thoughts shall
move,
But joys of friendship, tenderness, and love.

DUETTO. LEANDER.

*Come now, my sweet love, to the grove,
The Graces are waiting for you;
Thro' roses and woodbines we'll rove,
And kiss, as all true lovers do.*

HERO.

*O take both my hand and my heart,
My lover I know he is true;*

Till

HERO AND LEANDER. 81

*Till death shall direct us to part,
We'll kiss, as all true lovers do.*

BOTH.

*Adieu then to doubt and despair,
Fair virtue our loves will pursue ;
We'll not know a moment of care,
But kiss, as all true lovers do.*

*[They appear retiring to Leander's vessel,
but are stop'd by Abudah, Solano, De-
lah, and soldiers. The soldiers present
their spears at Leander.]*

ABUDAH.

Bind the villain.—O Sir, you're caught again !
Knock off his head, and let me have his brain ;
Now that my anger's rous'd, my rage is full,
I'll make a punch-bowl of the rascal's skull.

*[In this part of the scene, Minerva in a
cloud, attended by Hymen, descends in
the back scene, supposed to be the banks
of the Hellespont.]*

LEANDER.

O now farewell to hope !—My love, adieu,
I die content, because I die for you.

HERO.

O make his cause, ye Powers above, your care,
Let guilt shrink back, and innocence appear !
Support his soul, now death demands his prey,
And smooth his passage to the realms of day !

LEANDER.

May heaven still guard her, with peculiar care,
And make her happy, as it made her fair !

G

May

• 82 HERO AND LEANDER.

May calmest peace her future days attend,
And late may she to endless joys ascend !

ABUDAH.

Bring me a cauldron, hot as Alecto's kettle ;
First *Medusa's* snaky whip shall try his mettle ;
'Sdeath ! his blood I'll bottle, and in the dark
profound,
I'll sprinkle libations, to the furies round.

[*Minerva and Hymen come forward—
Abudah starts—all stand amazed.*]

MINERVA.

Cease, hell-hound—infernal monster, cease—
I come the blessed harbinger of peace,
To join in Hymen's bands this constant pair,
The youth deserving, and the virtuous fair ;
Their constancy and truth deserve my care.—
Stand forth, my children—Hymen, join their
hands,

[*A flourish of trumpets. They kneel, and
Hymen joins their bands.*]

'Tis Wisdom consecrates the sacred bands.

SONG. HYMEN.

Sweetest pleasures never ceasing,
Blessings, which the gods present,
Joys, with length of years encreasing,
Rosy health, and sweet content,
Await the fair, and deck the youth,
United in the bands of truth.

II.

And when old Time, with solemn pace,
Shall call to tell them, both must die ;
Touch'd, as he views their fond embrace,
He'll bless them first, then pass them by.
Sweetest pleasures, &c. (as in the 1st stanza.)

ABUDAH.

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ABUDAH.

What then, is all my greatness come to this !
Am I then baffled by a paltry miss ? —
Your power, Madam, certainly prevails ;
Wisdom, I find, pays no respect to tails.

LEANDER.

O thanks, eternal thanks, to you be given,
Thou best and brightest ornament of Heaven !

MINERVA.

Now strike the sprightly lyre ; all care away,
To mirth and joy go dedicate the day ;
I'll raise an altar to love's holy flame,
Inscrib'd with Hero's and Leander's name.

FINALE. LEANDER.

*Joy and pleasure now go round,
Beauty's triumph is to-day ;
Ev'ry voice in chorus sound,
This is Hymen's holiday.
Dress a garland for the fair,
Care and sorrow hither go ;
Daffodillies,
Virgin lillies—
Hymen says he'll have it so.*

HERO.

*Take my hand, you have my heart,
Indeed you've had it long ago ;
And now we'll never, never part—
Hymen says he'll have it so.*

CHORUS. *Joy and pleasure, &c.*

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S A F R I N A.

*Cupid is a foolish boy,
Once he try'd on me his bow;
But I never felt a joy,
Till Hymen said he'd have it so.*

CHORUS. *Joy and pleasure, &c.*

A B U D A H.

*Must I then give up the fair,
And see them laughing at my woe;
Live and lead a life of care?—
The Devil sure would have it so.*

CHORUS. *Joy and pleasure, &c.*

S O L A N O.

*Observe, ye fair, the moral here—
Let virtue in your bosoms glow;
You then may bid adieu to fear—
Hymen says he'll have it so.*

CHORUS. *Joy and pleasure, &c.*

T H E E N D.

H E R O.

7 JA 69

*And you shall find me true
And you shall find me true
And you shall find me true
And you shall find me true*

CHORUS. *Joy and pleasure, &c.*

S A F R I N A.

8

